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COMMUNITY SERVICE

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A PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER AND  
HER VICTROLA

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A BUSINESS MAN'S EXPERIENCE

By R. M. McCALL

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of  
Hon. Dr. R. S. Thornton  
Minister of Education*

*Department of Education  
Winnipeg, Manitoba*

# EDUCATION AMONG NEW CANADIANS

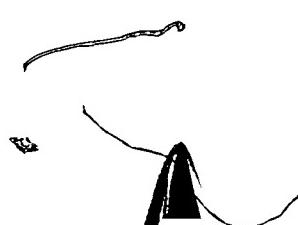
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During the past three years the Department of Education has been carrying on a steady campaign for providing Canadian schools with a Canadian atmosphere in the non-English speaking settlements in the Province of Manitoba. The difficulty of securing teachers for these schools is being met by the erection of the teacher's residence which not only provides a home for the teacher but in many cases becomes a centre for community life. In this way the influence of the school extends far beyond the actual teaching of the children. Already some one hundred and forty new schools and seventy-five teacher's residences have been established, and the work is steadily going on.

The encouraging results so far obtained are due to the efforts of a number of earnest and resourceful teachers whose devotion to duty under isolated and difficult conditions is worthy of high commendation. The following sketches give an intimate glimpse of the nature and conditions of the work of educating the New Canadians.

R. S. THORNTON,  
Minister of Education,

**57146**





School, collage, and pupils  
JULY 1912 - TWAZ

# THE SCHOOL AS A CENTRE FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE

BY ROSE A HAMBLY

(Read at the rural section of the Manitoba Educational Association at its meeting in 1919.)

During the last fifteen months I have been teaching in a Ruthenian settlement 45 miles from Winnipeg. The people in this particular district were unfortunate in choosing their homesteads, the land being, as one man aptly describes it—"too sand, too stone, too swamp." Some of them have been unfortunate in another respect; they have been the prey of the speculator and the tool of the politician. In this latter misfortune we, as older Canadians, share the blame and loss.

A young man,—a successful rural teacher of ten years' standing—once said to me, "I am quitting teaching; I want to be able to poke my own fire." In a number of the New Canadian districts, cottages have been built in connection with the schools, and I am one of those teachers who poke their own fire, and hear the music of their own tea-kettle.

## The Teacherage

Any one can readily perceive that a separate house is necessary for the teacher among a people whose mode of living differs so widely from our own. Only those who have been among them know how essential such a home is for the people themselves. I have in my district women who were transplanted straight from Austria to the place where they are now living, and had never had a chance to learn anything of our ways of housekeeping till the door of the teacherage was opened to them. In such districts the influence of the teacher's home is not less valuable than the teacher's work in the school.

The contractor finished the cottage the day that I went out, and the wagon that brought him to the station, carried me back to the school. My nearest neighbor—a crippled old woman—was standing at her gate, and waved to me as I passed. Her home is a moss-chinked cabin, 12 feet square, and the cost of the entire furnishings does not exceed the sum of ten dollars; yet I have never known any one richer in a sense of neighborliness and hospitality. She was the possessor of a cow, a potato

patch, and a well, and before night came she had managed to share all these things with me in so happy a manner, that I felt as if I had been welcomed into a kingdom.

Not all were so well disposed. Before I had been there a week one of the ratepayers who knew a little English, came to me and told me that the people did not desire a teacher who could not speak their own language.

"Woman teacher no good here; all these people bad like beasts. Only man who can fight stay here. These children wild like wolves, learn nothing unless you beat every day with big stick. How you going get letters? How you going get things from store? You no stop here, these people eat you up." Under the spell of this gloomy prophet, I felt my spirits rising. Here was a situation in which even Mark Tapley might find 'credit in being jolly.' I thanked my pessimistic friend, and privately resolved that if any one tried to "eat me up," I would furnish as difficult a meal as possible.

#### The Darker Side

As soon as I was settled, I started out to look up those people who were not sending their children to school. In the first home I visited, I found appalling conditions. Under the family bed—a wretched affair of rags and hay—a flock of hens was cooped, and a pig lately killed and not yet cut up, lay on its back on the floor, and invited dust and dirt with open arms. The winter's supply of potatoes was heaped in a corner. Two little girls of eight or nine, clad each in a single tattered garment, shrank against the wall and peered at me through their tangled hair. I was in one of the strongholds of poverty and ignorance, yet even here, hope and the love of beauty were not dead. In that fetid atmosphere, in the dim light that fell through the filthy window, a cherished geranium had put forth a sickly flower.

I learned that these two little girls spent the dark winter days alone in that hovel, while their fourteen year old brother and widowed mother cut cordwood in the bush. Having no clothes, they were prisoners except for short dashes in their bare feet to the stable near by. With the help of friends those two little girls were made ready for school, and I have never known two brighter, happier children. This was an extreme, but not an isolated case, as similar conditions existed in a degree in a number of the homes.

Going in and out of these places and seeing little children, who had died for lack of intelligent care, laid in the grave without the tenderness of any religious service, it seemed to me at times that I was living among a people who were outside the humanities of life. Yet this was only seeming, for out of these poor homes come children of great natural ability, a passion for learning, and nice moral perceptions; while the patient courage of the women is a thing to wonder at.

#### Evening Classes ..

For the benefit of the older Boys and Girls a night school was started, with classes two evenings a week. Not being accustomed to restraint or discipline, some of them were a little boisterous and inclined to disregard the property rights of others. On one occasion when hand sleighs belonging to the day pupils had been destroyed, I announced that there would be no evening classes till the sleighs were replaced. This was cheerfully done within forty-eight hours, and I have never since had grounds for complaint.

About this time a sewing machine was sent out as part of the school equipment. This was a great attraction for the girls. With a little assistance in the use of patterns, they were soon able to make their own dresses. During the winter the night school girls often came at 5 o'clock, and sewed for two hours before school. In the spring some of them went away to work in English districts and I have reason to believe that they acquitted themselves with credit, as I have received several letters from farmers, and 'farmers' wives, asking me to send them help for the summer.

#### During The Flu Epidemic

In common with many other districts we had an anxious time during the influenza epidemic. We were, however, more fortunate than some, in having a doctor, and many people in that part of the country undoubtedly owe their lives to Mr. Stratton's prompt action in sending help. The doctor made his headquarters at the school, and remained with us several weeks.

Nursing as it is ordinarily understood was almost out of the question. The homes have few comforts for those who are well, and no facilities for the care of the sick. Most of the beds are shallow boxes of boards or pales, with some loose hay thrown in and covered up with a single thickness of cotton.

For some time before the epidemic reached us, the children had been drilled repeatedly in the instructions laid down by our medical authorities, for the prevention and treatment of the disease, and lessons were given to the older girls in simple home nursing and diet for the sick.

Some strange things came to my knowledge. In an adjoining district, the wife of a man who was fairly convalescent under the doctor's treatment, thought to hasten his recovery from pneumonia by packing a tremendous plaster of mud on his chest. He died in a few hours. The women are especially helpless in dealing with infectious diseases. One poor woman told me she had lost five children in three days, of scarlet fever. Infant mortality is very high, and this largely due to improper feeding. Bottle-fed babies a month or two old can hardly be expected to thrive on milk and coffee varied with milk and tea.

It was a great relief when we were able to settle again to the regular work of the school. Evening classes were resumed with a somewhat wider scope. From the first, the night students had been encouraged to bring their friends, and a number of people had got into the way of dropping in to spend an hour. There were letters to be read and written, garments cut out and so many various little things to attend to, that in order to take care of them all, it seemed necessary to add another evening to the week's work.

### Community Gatherings

I talked the matter over with my young people and they were enthusiastic about the idea of a community gathering once a week. It is nearly always easy to draw a crowd for an all night dance. That was not at all what I was aiming at. I wanted to get all the people of the district together in a friendly social way. I explained that I was especially anxious to have the mothers—that if anybody had to stay home it was not mother.

We decided on two rules—ten o'clock closing and no smoking in the school. As the days lengthened, some happy spirit usually managed to set the clock back half an hour, and everybody appeared so blandly oblivious, I thought it best to follow their example. While I was positive in prohibiting smoking in the school, I had no desire to offend or banish the smokers. The cottage was placed at the disposal of those who felt that

cigarettes were indispensable to their happiness. A few of the older men occasionally availed themselves of the privilege.

To the two rules I added a request. I believe the people of my district are loyal; I think they concur in the sentiment of the woman who said to me, "I eat the English bread, I keep the English law." Outside of my own district the people are unknown to me. I explained to the night school that any one could depend on a welcome from me, except the man who had evaded his military responsibilities. I had no desire to make inquiries or be told the names of evaders, but it was my wish that the young man who had been sitting under a bush would remain under his bush so far as our socials were concerned. I have never referred to the matter since, but I have reason to believe that wish has been respected.

### The Gramophone

In order to avoid the paralyzing stiffness that sometimes settles on a company of people in new surroundings, we planned a programme of lively games for the first part of the evening. Sometimes we had a little concert, and here the school gramophone was of great assistance. None of the girls could dance, but several of the women knew some of the folk dances of their own country, and readily consented to teach us. One of the pleasantest features was that no one who could contribute to the evening's enjoyment had to be coaxed. They all came prepared to do their best as a matter of course. I have never known a better behaved crowd, and the good humor and fun were irresistible! We sometimes had a sprinkling of young people from neighboring districts, but the Friday night social remained a family gathering throughout the winter. The average attendance was 60. It was thought advisable to discontinue these meetings during Lent, but the people seemed to miss them so much that we are planning to resume them again, changing to Saturday night for the summer months. Now that everyone has got into the way of coming to the school, it should not be difficult to interest them in outdoor sports, and improving the school grounds.

There have been results far deeper than the pleasure of the moment. Women who have been living in the district for years met together for the first time in the school. There has been a noticeable improvement in dress and manner, and a

friendlier feeling pervades the community. I have in mind two sisters-in-law who live on adjoining farms, and had not spoken to each other for five years. The bitterness of a quarrel that had cost a life lay between the two houses, and it was not for a stranger to meddle. One night we were all filled with astonishment; the two sisters were dancing together! Away from the brooding and monotony of their home life, in that kinder atmosphere where everyone was unconsciously at his best, the better, truer instincts of their hearts had been wakened and flowered into forgiveness and reconciliation.

The Extension Service of the Department of Agriculture was very generous in its treatment of our Boys' and Girls' Club last year, sending us a large box of garden seeds. Some of the boys purchased registered grain from the Department, and in three of the homes at least the grain from this seed has been hand-selected for this spring's sowing. It was the business of the entire family during the long winter evenings. A number of the children purchased eggs, and in so doing were able to make a start in getting a pure bred flock of hens.

On application to the Department of Agriculture at Winnipeg and Ottawa, farm bulletins were obtained for distribution, and names of those farmers desiring further bulletins placed on the mailing list of the Department. In a number of cases the teacher was asked to explain certain cuts and diagrams to a pupil, who in turn translated and explained to his father.

#### Sympathetic Co-operation

We are indebted to the Fort Garry Chapter of the I.O.D.E. for a splendid box of books. Such a gift given in such a spirit has done much to strengthen the work of the school. "English ladies who have never seen us sent us these books for love," wrote one little girl. Twenty-six pupils have qualified for the "Children of the Empire" buttons which are given to those who have read ten books.

The difficulty is not to induce the children to read,— but to procure enough reading matter. Outside the school and teacherage there is none, and the annual grant of ten dollars leaves us like Oliver Twist, asking for "more." In these districts remote from Picture Plays and funny papers, there is a great hunger for books. The child who can learn to know and love good books and above all the beautiful book of Outdoors

has laid hold of one of the most lasting benefits and pleasures of life, and will never be friendless and alone. Perhaps no greater gift lies within our bestowal.

### The Sewing Machine

The school sewing machine has proved invaluable to the women. When they wish to sew during school hours, the machine is moved into the cloak room, and class work is not interrupted. Quite often they remain during night school, and have tea at the cottage. On such occasions little presents appear mysteriously in my kitchen, for the Ruthenian woman is splendidly independent. Out of native tact and kindness she excels in the difficult art of graceful giving. Always her gifts represent her time and skill. I have seen broilers so beautifully and wonderfully prepared, that I wished to photograph them to show to my friends. Those teachers who have lived among the Ruthenians know that the first new-laid eggs, the earliest berries, the finest vegetables and the nicest delicate cheese, find their way to the teacher's table.

### Ruthenian Housekeepers

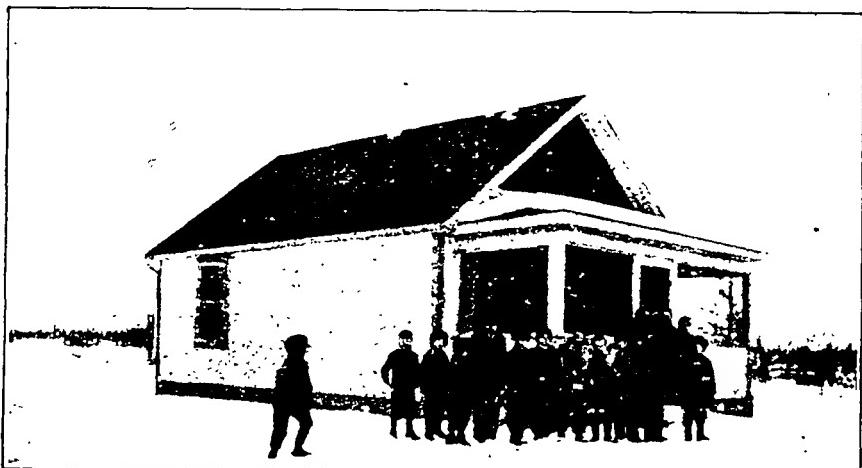
In some respects they practise an economy that is foreign to us. After I had used all the green onions in my garden, I went to a neighbor for some. She did not extravagantly pull them up by the roots as I had done, but culled a leaf here and there from the strongest sets to make up my bunch. When she wants new potatoes she puts her hand into the hill and takes out two or three of the largest, leaving the plant undisturbed. She is frankly curious about my housekeeping methods, and I am equally interested in hers. It is pleasant to see the beautiful loaves of bread she bakes in her big clay oven, and the wholesome meal she grinds between two stones and she thoroughly understands the food value of dried peas, beans and other vegetables, and the manifold uses of skim milk, both sweet and sour.

I know no woman more faithful than the Ruthenian in her devotion to duty as she understands it. She shirks nothing. With her willing heart and strong arms she thinks to achieve by sheer physical force the things that seem good in her eyes—a bigger patch of cleared land, better buildings, and above all, a chance for the children. For herself she asks nothing; and here she fails. She has never had a chance to learn her duty to herself—that leaven which makes sweet and healthful the

daily bread of life. The house that replaces the shack does not always mean a proportionate increase in convenience. It sometimes means discomfort on a larger scale. Here is a vast field of opportunity calling for the exercise of understanding, sympathy, and tact. The women do not want pamphlets or lectures, or even teachers. You may be all these things to them if you wish, but first and always you must be neighbor and friend.

In dealing with the older people, I have often wished that I could speak to them in their own language. The inability to do so, however, sometimes leads to a special effort to learn English. At our Christmas concert I was pleased and touched to find that some of the parents had learnt a little English in order to express their appreciation and good wishes in words that I could understand. There is a language as universal as the wind or rain—the language of the human heart. This with the bond of a common interest—the Children—soon leads to mutual understanding.

The children realize that the school is their great opportunity, the door to true citizenship. Once they know what is expected of them, I have found them faithful in all the little duties that devolve on them in the way of personal neatness, care of school property, and consideration of others. When the larger responsibilities of life come upon them, they will, I trust, not be able to forget the lessons of the school and the flag—that the business of life is noble living.



Another type of Teacher's cottage.

## A PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHER AND HER VICTROLA

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BY DORA HALSTEAD

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(Published in Canadian Music Trades Journal, Oct. 1918)

When I first came to S.D. No. 1863, on the 31st of October 1917, I realized that no easy task was to be mine; but as I scanned the faces of the boys and girls who stood before me in the schoolroom on the 12th day of November,—our first school day,—I made up my mind that, come what might, no other teacher or visitor should ever see those faces as I saw them then. My heart ached to think that anywhere in Canada one could see such a picture of listless, hopeless stolidity, tinged with suspicion, in the faces of children who ought to have been radiating joyous youth.

Of the thirty-four pupils enrolled during the year 1917-18, twenty-three were boys and eleven were girls.

Their ages ranged from five to seventeen years; not one could speak—or even understand any English, but all spoke in the Ruthenian or Polish tongue when they could be induced to talk at all,—which was but seldom.

None of them could read or write in the language of their fathers; nor could the majority of the older members of this community. They had retained the manners and customs, as well as the speech, of their native land almost entirely; and everywhere the poverty and listlessness, the ignorance and indifference to all things Canadian were appalling.

If you were to visit the school to-day, you would notice a remarkable change; the listlessness is gone; the dulness of eye has been replaced by the light of laughter; the apathy, by joyous activity; and English is the only language spoken, written or sung on the school site.

### Music

What has brought about such a change in eight months?

Methinks I can truthfully reply that the change is due, most of all, to the introduction of the "Sunshine for the Soul"—music.

It enters into our every lesson in one form or another, and the greatest help in my work has been afforded by the gramophone.

This was introduced into my school on the 2nd of January this year, and has well repaid the amount spent on purchasing it.

I have always believed in singing as a help in teaching, and although my "vocal" powers are very limited, I have always contrived to teach by rote some of the best of the patriotic songs and old-time favorites, and have utilized the singing of them to assist in writing lessons, drill and marching.

But there are times when one simply cannot break forth vocally, to lead or to teach some joyful little song; and there was no instrumental music supplied. So the gramophone was purchased, and in time about forty records; many of them of "Primary Songs," patriotic songs, and a few classical pieces sung by leading vocalists or played by well-known bands.

The children never seem to become weary of the music, and every child in school can handle the instrument, each one doing so almost reverently.

Everything is done spontaneously, yet without disorder.

#### Patriotic Ceremony

At 9 a.m. we hold our little patriotic ceremony outside whenever weather permits.

The flag is run to the top of the mast by the boys at 8.45 a.m., or earlier, and the bell is rung at 9 a.m.; whereupon the children "fall in" in three ranks facing the flag.

After the flag salute, we sing, "We'll Never Let the Old Flag Fall," and "O Canada," or "God Save the King."

If there is no dust or rain we have the gramophone outside—on the manual training bench, as we have no stand for it—and anyone of the boys attends to the machine and records.

There has never been any confusion or disputing as to who shall do this.

After hearing the record, "British Troops Passing Through Boulogne," the pupils wished to learn to sing "Tipperary"—and march into school singing it.

Many of the pupils were troubled with adenoids; and the same record suggested cheering the flag as a means of developing better breathing and so counteracting the growth of the adenoids; and now we have developed a school yell—or more than one. The newest one is:—

Who are? Who are? Who are we?  
We're the 'NEW CANADIANS,' don't you see?  
Can we speak English?—'Well!—I guess!'  
Do we love Canada—Yes! Yes!! Yes!

Although we are not using the gramophone continually, we have used it in connection with almost all subjects.

In practising writing, the rhythm has enabled us to obtain a free, muscular movement, for we write to the accompaniment of the music of a march or to the time of "Pack Up Your Troubles in Your Old Kit Bag," etc.; and this also helps us to obtain evenness of stitches in sewing.

"The Mother Goose Songs" have proved of incalculable value in oral language lessons, enabling the children to obtain correct pronunciation; and the boys love to dramatize them; "Little Jack Horner," "Hey Diddle-diddle," and "Humpty-Dumpty," being particular favorites, not only to be dramatized, but also drawing lessons, to be illustrated by blackboard sketches or by pencil drawings.

#### Initiative and Correlation

Thus initiative is being developed. One day when, during a writing lesson, rain-drops were heard pattering against the window-pane, one boy, unconsciously almost, softly hummed,

"Rain! Rain! Do not go;  
Rain! Rain! we love you so."

upon which, another boy, looking at me, then at the gramophone significantly, and receiving a nod in answer, quietly stepped up to the table, chose the record (an exercise in reading, you see) and put it on to be played. We all put down pencils, and listened; then sang it in unison.

As we took up our pencils again, one boy put his hand into his pocket, took out a piece of chalk, leaned towards the blackboard on his right, and wrote: "Rain"

"rain" whereupon anoth-

er boy laughed and said, "No, Mike! that is for hurt; not window," so a correction was made. Then others sought words with 'ain' and 'ane,' in readers, and wrote them on the blackboard. So the one gramophone record provided suggestions for writing, spelling, discussion, and self-control. All our lessons are correlated. The children are never idle, for they think out spelling, drawing, paper-cutting, reading, and writing lessons for themselves after completing the work set for them to do.

In drawing lessons we sometimes have contests—one child will hum a tune or even a line of one, and the others draw something to prove they recognize it. Then the one who is first to do so sings for the others to draw. At other times, the leader will put on a record and play a few lines, then stop and the rest must illustrate.

Nature study and observation are encouraged by "Do You Know the Trees by Name When You See Them Growing?" After hearing "A Lullaby," one boy next day produced a cradle he had made during manual training.

"The Song of the Chimes," by Alma Gluck, resulted in drawings of bells, in a picture of the Madonna being brought to school, and also in a talk about the "Christ-child in the Stable."

"Tra-la-la-la-la, oh, Hear the Swallow" not only helped to secure a lightness of tone, but caused a hunt for a picture of a swallow, a recollection of some we had seen; a reminder of the necessity of taking care of the birds that do not migrate; and an inspection of bird houses made during woodwork lessons.

The little ones cut out birds and bird-houses from paper, and one boy made a bird-box model from plasticene.

### Progress

The children love to come to school; no corporal punishment is needed; they are making rapid strides in English as well as in other lessons although there has been no formal teaching.

They are learning to love Canada, the Flag and what it represents. They are brighter, quick to learn, and anxious to help in any possible way.

They are wonderfully loyal to the school and teacher and are absolutely trustworthy in school. Not even a pencil or a piece of chalk has been stolen, yet the pupils have charge

of the supplies. The blackboards are in constant use; the boys and girls have each a piece of chalk in an envelope or pocket and may have more upon application; yet we have used one-third or one-quarter of the amount of chalk usually supplied by and used in such schools in the same length of time.

The pupils work indefatigably and their interest in school is manifest to all; and the greater part of this interest has been aroused through the use of the gramophone and good attractive records.



"Filling the Gap" in more ways than one, snapped at recess unknown to the children.



These children attend school gladly.

## A RETURNED SOLDIER AND HIS INFLUENCE

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(Letter addressed to the HON. DR. THORNTON, Minister of Education, by F. B. LACEY, Reeve of Mossy River Municipality—March 1919.)

Whilst travelling around amongst the people in the unorganized portions of Manitoba one cannot help but notice the changes that have taken place among the people who came from Central Europe a few short years ago. They are amongst the most progressive people in Canada, and in ten years from now when those who are now attending the schools to-day shall have grown up and gone out to the various fields of labor open to them, we shall find among them some of our best women and men. The teaching of the English language British ideals, sanitation, etc., etc., is lifting these boys and girls up into a different and better life.

I was at Asquith school a few weeks ago and was very much struck with what I saw there one day. I may say that although "Asquith" is the name of a highly distinguished British statesman, the Asquith School District is made up of a population (the older people) hailing from Galicia, Poland, Russia, and the district is back in Tp. 33, Range 20. The school house with the teacher's dwelling was erected during the season of 1917 and the school was opened on December 18th. 1917. Mr. Lewis Inglott, a returned soldier, who had been wounded over in France, was placed in charge. Now here was a problem. Forty-three children of school age not one of whom could either understand or speak a word of English, and a man who could neither understand or speak a word of Ruthenian or Polish, to teach them. Forty-three to one, quite a spread. This, as I say, was on the 18th of December, 1917. The work began and went on without interruption until June 30th, 1918, when school closed until August 1st, when it was reopened by Mr. Inglott and kept open until November 3rd, when it was (by order of the Doctor) closed on account of the "Flu." On December 1st it was again opened and continued to Christmas holidays, making in all about ten months' teaching.

I was visiting the district during the first week of January last, being the Ruthenian and Russian Christmastide. I was in the teacher's dwelling and we had just eaten breakfast when

a rap on the door was heard. Mr. Inglott answered "come in." A lad of about fourteen years stepped inside and gave the regular military salute and asked for the whistle used as a signal for the assembly of the pupils. He received it and stood watching the hands of the clock and at the appointed minute he again saluted, and marched out to his post on the playground and blew the signal. The pupils all ran out from the school room where they had been waiting and "fell in." At the word of command from Sergt. Major Glengara, they numbered off and were put through the manual exercises by the sergeant major (fourteen years old). They stood at attention while the sergeant major came to Mr. Inglott and saluting said, "Ready for inspection, Sir," at which Mr. Inglott as officer in command went over and made the regular inspection with sergeant major at his side. This being got through with, the company marched into the school room. It was the day after their Christmas celebrations and Mr. Inglott remarked that they usually sang a morning hymn and then prayed before beginning their day's work, but he said "Children, let us sing a verse of the Christmas Anthem you were learning before Christmas." It was beautiful to hear those children sing all in English "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing," "Glory to The New Born King." Perhaps they did not all have the correct time (although many of them did), but God bless them, they sang as though they meant it all and it was glorious to see every face beaming with delight. Getting done with this the teacher held his hand up as though he was about to offer a prayer, and every boy and girl knelt down to pray. It was a quiet prayer meeting. No words were heard to come from the lips of those little ones by me as I sat there, but each one was evidently engaged in his or her morning devotions. In about three minutes they rose and were at once interested in the day's work. The teacher told me the reason he did not have them pray audibly was on account of their belonging to different Churches, such as Roman Catholic, Greek Catholic, and Orthodox Greek, so no one he thought could object so long as each was allowed to use his own words in his own way.

The day's work over for the school they all sang the old evening hymn, "Now the Day is Over" and had their little prayer and said their "Good Night" to the teacher and myself. Away they trooped to their homes full of life and happiness and contentment.

## A BUSINESS MAN'S EXPERIENCE.

### A NEW CANADIAN TEACHER

(Letter to the Minister of Education from R. M. McCall,  
Manager of the Canadian Bank of Commerce, Dauphin.)

As Organizer and Secretary for Boys' and Girls' Clubs in this district it has been my duty and privilege to visit a considerable number of the rural schools in the Municipality, and recently I had an experience which I think it well to record as throwing some light on what can be accomplished educationally in districts where the non-English element predominates.

Accompanied by a friend I visited School 1245 for the purpose of assisting the teacher in the organisation of their Boys' and Girls' Club. We were very cordially received by the teacher of the school, a clean cut, intelligent young man of Ruthenian parentage and whose English, although not perfect, was much above the average. As we entered the school the children immediately rose, although our visit was unannounced, and remained standing without the slightest disorder until such time as they were instructed by their teacher to resume their seats.

We addressed the children on the subject of Boys' and Girls' Club work and received a respectful and intelligent hearing. I say "intelligent" advisedly, because the questions which were asked after we had concluded our remarks indicated that the children were quite alive to what had been said. After the business in hand had been concluded, although I noticed there was no musical instrument in the room, I asked if the children would give us a song. Much to my surprise the teacher had a singing class which rendered very creditably a patriotic selection. The class was composed of about six girls and six boys who had been taught to sing in two parts, the girls singing the soprano part and the boys singing the alto, assisted by the teacher. At the conclusion of this performance the whole class gave a splendid rendering of "O Canada" and I would like to say that our entire visit to the school was both a revelation and an inspiration. If it were only possible to secure young men of this calibre to take charge of rural schools in non-English communities, the difficulties and problems of education in such communities would largely be solved.

I felt it might be encouraging to your Department to hear that your efforts to educate and Canadianize children of non-English extraction are, in some cases at any rate, meeting with a large measure of success.



Latest style of Teacher's cottage.  
Floor Plan on Page 20

BIBLIOTHÈQUE  
<sup>f9</sup>  
SAINT-SULPICE

